

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 06920 251410Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01

PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 L-02 PRS-01 AID-05

OMB-01 DODE-00 OES-03 AGR-05 /067 W

----- 103044

R 251220Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9368

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 6920

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, SA, US

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT TO PRINCE FAHD ON U.S./SAUDI ECONOMIC
COMMISSION

1. SUMMARY: PRINCE FAHD HAS MET WITH THE MINISTERIAL
PLANNING GROUP AND THE COORDINATOR OF THE U.S./SAUDI
ECONOMIC COMMISSION TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE OF THE COMMISSION.
HE INSTRUCTED THE MINISTERS TO BE SERIOUS IN THEIR APPROACH
TO U.S. RECOMMENDATIONS, AND TO SET PRIORITIES FOR CARRYING
THEM OUT. THE DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE PROPOSAL WAS NOT
APPROVED. THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS' ROLE FOR THE CIVILIAN
SECTOR WAS ENCOURAGED AND WILL BE EXPLORED IN DETAIL.
THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT WILL BE STUDIED BY FAHD
AND IS EXPECTED TO BE APPROVED. END SUMMARY

2. ER. SULEIMAN SULAIM, COORDINATOR OF THE U.S./SAUDI
ECONOMIC COMMISSION, BRIEFED THE ECONOMIC COUNSELOR
NOVEMBER 19 AFTER MEETING WITH SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
PRINCE FAHD BIN ABDUL AZIZ AND THE THREE PLANNING MINISTERS,
ABDUL AZIZ QURAYSHI, HISHAM NAZER, AND MOHAMMAD ABA AL KHAYL.
A DOZEN-PAGE REPORT HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO FAHD THROUGH
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PAGE 02 JIDDA 06920 251410Z

ABA AL KHAYL BY DR. SULAIM, GIVING A DETAILED LISTING OF WHAT

HAD BEEN DONE SO FAR BY THE VARIOUS WORKING GROUPS. ACCORDING TO SULAIM, IT ALSO DISCUSSED IN SOME DETAIL THE U.S.-PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE, THE POSSIBILITY OF UTILIZING THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN THE CIVILIAN SECTOR, AND THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT.

3. WITH REGARD TO THE DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE, ALTHOUGH SULAIM GAVE NO DETAILS OF THE DISCUSSION, THE IDEA WAS DISAPPROVED. (WE ARE UNLIKELY TO HEAR ANY OFFICIAL REPLY EITHER FROM ABA AL KHAYL OR FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE SAUDI COMMISSION TO THE PROPOSAL SINCE IT WAS NEVER SUBMITTED THROUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.)

4. MINISTER OF FINANCE ABA AL KHAYL HAD RECOMMENDED AN EXPANSION IN THE ROLE OF THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN SAUDI ARABIA TO INCLUDE SOME CIVILIAN PROJECTS. PRINCE FAHD REMARKED THAT THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WAS ABSOLUTELY INCAPABLE OF DOING THE JOB. HE SAID THAT PERHAPS THE CORPS COULD DO SOMETHING ON BOTH TRAINING THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AND CARRYING OUT CERTAIN PROJECTS IN THE KINGDOM.

5. SULAIM SAID "AS EXPECTED" HISHAM NAZER WAS SOMEWHAT DERISIVE OF THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION SO FAR. NAZER TOLD PRINCE FAHD THAT THE PRODUCT OF THE LAST THREE MONTHS' WORK WAS SIMPLY VISITS BY A SERIES OF EXPERTS WITH NOT MUCH ACCOMPLISHED. PRINCE FAHD DIRECTLY DISAGREED WITH NAZER NOTING THAT THIS WAS ONLY THE FIRST STEP AND THE SECOND STEP WAS TO BE TAKEN NOW. HE WANTED IT UNDERSTOOD THAT HIS MINISTERS SHOULD BE SERIOUS ABOUT THE APPROACH TO THE U.S./SAUDI COMMISSION, BUT OF COURSE THEY COULD NOT APPROVE EVERYTHING. HE ORDERED THE THREE MINISTERS TO HOLD A SERIES OF MEETINGS (WITH DR. SULAIM) TO DISCUSS THE PROGRAM THAT MIGHT BE CARRIED OUT BY THE JOINT COMMISSION. NAZER SAID THAT THERE WERE TOO MANY COMMISSIONS BEING ORGANIZED BY TOO MANY COUNTRIES NOW AND HE SUGGESTED THAT A COORDINATING BODY BE ESTABLISHED TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH JUST TWO STATES: THE UNITED STATES AND GERMANY. PRINCE FAHD SAID THAT THIS COULD BE CONSIDERED AND THAT HE WANTED RECOMMENDATIONS. HE SAID THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THEY NOT ONLY BE SERIOUS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 JIDDA 06920 251410Z

CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE U.S./ SAUDI COMMISSION BUT SAG SERIOUSNESS ABOUT IT SHOULD BE MADE APPARENT.

6. ON THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT, THE MINISTERS WERE SURPRISED TO FIND THAT THE DRAFT AGREEMENT FORWARDED TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SOME TIME AGO HAD NOT YET BEEN SEEN BY PRINCE FAHD. THE AGREEMENT WAS DISCUSSED AND FAHD SAID THAT HE WOULD MAKE A DECISION SHORTLY (DR. SULAIM

FEELS THAT IT WILL BE A POSITIVE DECISION.)

7. SULAIM IN SUMMING UP NOTED THAT THE ORGANIZATIONAL
FRAMEWORK FOR THE U.S./ SAUDI COMMISSION OR FOR CARRYING
OUT WORK UNDER THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND
BY THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS (IF APPROVED) HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED.
HE SAID THAT HE WOULD SHORTLY BE SETTING UP MEETINGS WITH ALL THREE
MINISTERS AND WOULD KEEP US INFORMED CONCERNING PROGRESS.
AKINS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, COMMITTEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974JIDDA06920
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740341-0674
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741115/aaaaamqo.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <20-Nov-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATUS REPORT TO PRINCE FAHD ON U.S./SAUDI ECONOMIC COMMISSION
TAGS: EAID, SA, US, CORPS OF ENGINEERS, (FAHD, PRINCE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005